

## Statement by NIHR on Bahraini Women's Day

Manama on December 1, 2018

In 2008, with a generous initiative of Her Royal Highness Princess Sabeeka Bint Ibrahim Al-Khalifa, wife of His Majesty the King and President of the Supreme Council of Women, the first day of December every year was adopted to celebrate Bahraini Women's Day. The idea of celebrating this day comes in recognition for the role of Bahraini women in the development of the Bahraini society, as a reminder of what they have offered over decades of work to promote various aspects of life, and to identify their prominent role, which transcended the local borders to reach regional and international forums, where Bahraini women became an example of the distinguished Bahraini citizen at various levels.

The Bahraini Women's Day this year is dedicated to the celebration of Bahraini women in the field of legislative and municipal work, which aims at highlighting the reality of Bahraini women's progress in the legislative field and municipal councils, as well as the challenges and opportunities for women in this unconventional field. It is worth mentioning that this day coincides this year with the passing of nearly 100 years since the establishment of the first municipal system in the Kingdom of Bahrain, in which Bahraini women witnessed their first form of political participation in the 1930s.

The Kingdom of Bahrain is considered one of the most advanced countries in the area of the empowerment of women, in terms of its uniqueness in having an advanced program for the empowerment of women in the political area and the participation in public life, namely "the political participation program" prepared by the Supreme Council for Women, which aimed, in its 5<sup>th</sup> edition launched in 2016 in preparation for the participation in the parliamentary and municipal elections of 2018, to promote awareness of the importance of the presence of women in the political arena through the Council of Representatives and Municipal Councils, to enable them to exercise their role in the formulation of public policies, the development of national legislation and the promotion of democracy.

This was positively reflected in the high participation rate of Bahraini women in running for membership in the Council of Representatives and Municipal Councils in the parliamentary and municipal elections of 2018. In the parliamentary aspect, (40) women competed for membership in the Council of Representatives consisting of (40) parliamentary members. In the municipal aspect, (8) women competed for the membership of the three elected municipal councils consisting of (30) members.

On this occasion, the NIHR emphasizes that it shall work with its broad mandate, stressed by its Incorporation Law pursuant to the Paris Principles, to follow up on the adherence to the international conventions and treaties emanating from the United Nations Organization, which have been ratified or acceded to by the Kingdom of Bahrain in the area of women's rights, with a view to achieve the fifth goal of Sustainable Development Goals on gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.